

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)
Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

BIRTH CONTROL

(By Gandhiji)

It is not without the greatest hesitation and reluctance that I approach this subject. The question of using artificial methods for birth control has been referred to me by correspondents ever since my return to India. Though I have answered them personally, I have never hitherto dealt with the subject publicly.

My attention was drawn to the subject, now thirty-five years ago, when I was a student in England. There was then a hot controversy raging between a purist who would not countenance anything but natural means and a doctor who advocated artificial means. It was at that early time in my life that I became, after leanings for a brief period towards artificial means, a convinced opponent of them. I now observe that in some Hindi papers the methods are described in a revoltingly open manner which shocks one's sense of decency. I observe, too, that one writer does not hesitate to cite my name as among the supporters of artificial methods of birth control. I cannot recall a single occasion when I spoke or wrote in favour of such methods. I have seen also two distinguished names having been used in support. I hesitate to publish them without reference to their owners.

There can be no two opinions about the necessity of birth control. But the only method handed down from ages past is self-control or *brahmacharya*. It is an infallible sovereign remedy doing good to those who practise it. And medical man will earn the gratitude of mankind if instead of devising artificial means of birth control they will find out the means of self-control. The union is meant not for pleasure but for bringing forth progeny. And union is a crime when the desire for progeny is absent.

Artificial methods are like putting a premium upon vice. They make man and woman reckless. And respectability that is being given to the methods must hasten the dissolution of the restraints that public opinion puts upon one. Adoption of artificial methods must result in imbecility and nervous prostration. The remedy will be found to be worse than the disease. It is wrong and immoral to seek to escape the consequences of one's acts. It is good for a person who over-

eats to have an ache and a fast. It is bad for him to indulge his appetite and then escape the consequences by taking tonics or other medicines. It is still worse for a person to indulge his animal passions and escape the consequences of his acts. Nature is relentless and will have full revenge for any such violation of her laws.

Moral results can only be produced by moral restraints. All other restraints defeat the very purpose for which they are intended. The reasoning underlying the use of artificial methods is that indulgence is a necessity of life. Nothing can be more fallacious. Let those who are eager to see the births regulated explore the lawful means devised by the ancients, and try to find out how they can be revived. An enormous amount of spade work lies in front of them. Early marriages are a fruitful source of adding to the population. The present mode of life has also a great deal to do with the evil of unchecked procreation. If those causes are investigated and dealt with, society will be morally elevated. If they are ignored by impatient zealots, and if artificial methods become the order of the day, nothing but moral degradation can be the result.

A society that has already become enervated through a variety of causes will become still further enervated by the adoption of artificial methods. Those men therefore who are light-heartedly advocating artificial methods cannot do better than study the subject afresh, stay their injurious activity and popularize *brahmacharya* both for the married and the unmarried. That is the only noble and straight method of birth control.

Young India, 12-3-'25

Let the Indian youth treasure in their hearts the quotation with which M. Bureau's book ends: "The Future is for the nations who are chaste".

Young India, 19-8-'26

SELF-RESTRAINT V. SELF-INDULGENCE

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GANDHIJI AND BIRTH CONTROL

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

An American fair friend and reader of the *Harijan*, writes to me to say as follows :

"In the last copies of *Harijan* (July 11, 18, 25, 1953) I read articles by Colin Clark about population problems. As a friend of the Asian populations in general, who have been so exploited during the last hundreds of years by an enterprising but greedy West, I cannot refrain from giving my opinion on this most fundamental problem of all. Before I go on let me quote one of Gandhiji's sayings: 'What a terrible responsibility it is to be a parent'! 'The aim of human life is deliverance... freedom from birth, by breaking the bonds of the flesh, by becoming one with God. Now marriage is a hindrance in the attaining of this supreme object, inasmuch as it only tightens the bonds of the flesh. Celibacy is a great help, inasmuch as it enables one to lead a life of full surrender to God'...."

"Now I know that complete Brahmacharya is asked too much of us ordinary mortals. Continence in marriage is only given to a few of the best among us. But when I read that the population of India increases by 1 million a year, I think something should be done in the interest of those unfortunate babies, who never asked to be born in the first place."

And she argues, as many others do today, to resort to birth-control by using contraceptives. As she puts it,

"It is far better I think to either not marry or practise continence or, like most do, practise birth-control. Everything is better than the cause of misfortune of someone else."

However she is very clear in her mind that this remedy is perhaps worse than the disease, though helpful to some in some way. To quote her own words :

"As far as birth-control is concerned, I must admit that it is a makeshift, a cheating of the most fundamental law of nature, something that may lead to moral degradation. This is all true. But I claim: it all depends who practises it. In a marriage where great love and friendship is the key-note; the animal part is secondary matter. But, for instance, here in America artificial stimulation of the sex instinct is often nauseating and denotes a down-going civilization. It is in a way the same as with prohibition. Prohibition in America proved to be a race in who could best evade the law; it led to licentiousness and crime; but that does not prove that prohibition in itself is bad. It is all a matter of who practises it."

She was provoked to write to me again on the subject when she read Shri Frydman's article, "The Unborn" (*Harijan*, 19-9-53).

A similar sort of reaction is much more categorically expressed to me by an English friend and reader of this paper. He says,

"I think I should say, in frankness, that one issue where I still think your editing is at fault, and even a distortion of what Gandhiji said, is on the subject of India's population. Surely Gandhiji again and again expressed himself in favour of limitation of population, through self-restraint. One would get the impression from recent comments of yours that you think there is no real problem at all, and that the only people who are pleading for it are interfering outsiders or people who have no contact with the masses..... To suggest that those who are concerned about this are demanding that India should have no more babies, as I thought a recent

number of *Harijan* did, seems to me a quite ludicrous misrepresentation.

"I believe that throughout the world now the time has come for us to arrive, through continence, at a stability of population."

The articles which seem to have offended these two friends were, by Prof. Colin Clark, a well-known economist, and by Shri Maurice Frydman, a friend of India. They were not expected to go to discuss the question of population in all its aspects. The economist, in his articles, only challenges some of the conclusions that economic sciences take as proved, and refutes them and says that increasing population can be supported if a certain plan of work and economy be adopted, — a conclusion which Gandhiji also, in his own way, put before the Indian people. The other contribution was a poetic statement bringing out another aspect of the question which is often ignored by the birth-control school. It no way intended nor meant to say what the two friends mistake it to do. Nor should the views expressed in the two articles be necessarily taken to be of the editor. In this connection, I may incidentally mention here that the general practice of this paper is to have signed articles; and views expressed in them are of their writers' own; and I may be associated with them, if at all, only in a general way as its editor.

Coming to the points raised by the two correspondents, I should say how I understand Gandhiji on this question: As I wrote to the English friend, which, I hope, satisfied him, Gandhiji was surely in favour of birth-control through self-restraint. But he never tolerated the idea of artificial contraceptives.

Gandhiji's position on this question is basically different from a demographer's or an economist's or even a doctor's. He did not speak of birth-control because of demography or economics telling him so. It was with very great meaning and significance that he named his book on this subject as *Self-restraint v. Self-indulgence*. To him, it was not a question of controlling population *anyhow*; the principle of ends and means both being good applied here also. That was because to Gandhiji this most vital and mystic activity of the human being is an eternal problem to be solved in the right way. It was therefore not a problem for a certain time or a certain people or age. He therefore held that self-restraint, and continence even in marriage, is a *Dharma* — a duty of man on earth.

Again, he held that this vital activity is only for procreation and is never for pleasure, as the birth-control school of thought seems to hold. That procreation is a responsibility and one has to be wise and discriminating in resorting to it, he surely agreed. But to evade birth and still have sexual indulgence he abhorred with all his soul, because he emphatically said that it was

"moral bankruptcy" and would surely kill the soul of a people who wantonly took to that malpractice in sexual relationship. To him self-restraint was not merely for the mundane gain of population-control; that was only a by-product of that essential virtue of the human being, self-restraint, which is necessary for his moral and spiritual progress and salvation.

Therefore those who say that Gandhiji also agreed to birth-control are only partially true. But then to use the expression 'birth-control' would be wrong here, as it has come to have only the restricted meaning of control through artificial methods only. He also disliked these methods, as they rendered their user irresponsible to the natural result of his act, viz. birth of a child, and thus made him a reckless follower of self-indulgence, which the American friend has keenly noted in her letter quoted at the beginning. She has aptly compared it with drink and prohibition. According to Gandhiji, drink and irresponsible self-indulgence in sex are always bad; they are not so merely for certain climes or countries, age or time.

With these remarks, I would say, at the end, that Gandhiji wished us to control birth *through continence*; but he wholly rejected the methods which the mechanical genius in the West has devised and wishes to spread elsewhere. It would be doing injustice to him and harm to the cause of humanity to say that Gandhiji was for population-control and not mention along with it that it must be through self-restraint, because, to him, the means were all that mattered and they had to be right if we cared to achieve right ends in a rightful manner.

1-12-'53

It Is Not Enough

President Eisenhower has proposed to create an international agency, under the United Nations, whose function it should be to store world uranium and such other fissionable minerals and allocate them for peaceful use. There is nothing bad in the proposal as such nor rejectable, so far as it goes. But it is not enough. The question is, will it secure to humanity safety from the infernal agonies of the atom bomb, which threaten it any moment if the third world war breaks out, which God forbid. What about the great stock-piling of such bombs by the U.S.A., by the Soviet, by any other nation? Surely these have only one use, and that is what Hiroshima and Nagasaki have told us in deadly words of infernal fires. Will these powers meet and consider to ban atomic weapons altogether in war and surrender their stock to an agency which may lodge them calmly at the bottom of the deep seas which only can stomach them without any harm to anybody? However, we should wait and see what the 'atomic' powers of the world do about the presidential proposal.

25-12-'53

M. P.

THE POWER OF CULTURE

A recent Press report from Pan Mun Jon in Korea describes the brave action of an officer of the Indian army who walked into the midst of a mob of rioting Chinese prisoners of war and quieted them by saying, "What kind of Chinese are you? You have not invited either me or my men to have tea and cigarettes!"

We have been writing a lot in these pages lately about the role of *culture* in human society. The response of the enraged Chinese POW's to the Indian officer's action illustrates the power of cultural tradition. No amount of moralizing or "preaching" at these angry men could have produced the effect that was gained by a simple reference to the tradition of Chinese courtesy. The Indian, some may say, simply "exploited" the tradition for an expedient end, but even if this is so, there is still something quite wonderful about the fact that a simple reminder could cause the rioters to stop and think what they were doing.

An incident of this sort makes you reflect upon the millions and millions of Chinese people who, in their childhood, were taught to honour guests with courtesy and hospitality. This is the way, they came to understand, a Chinese human being behaves. It is a part of the dignity of a Chinese human being.

But suppose a similar tradition could be more broadly based, which would develop in the people of all nations a love and respect for others—a tradition which would be taught to all children, not as Chinese, or as European, or as American, but simply as *human beings*!

This, we think, is the way to world peace, and the only sure way.

The psychology of war and war-making is a deliberate attack on what already exists of the basic cultural attitude of man's respect for man. In order to prosecute a war, a nation must wear away all *universal* feelings of human sympathy, converting them into nationalist passions. Thus young American soldiers must be *taught* to pull the trigger on enemy troops; without special training, many will deliberately miss, or will not shoot at all, according to the reports of psychologists.

Perhaps we should consider that all war—even war for the high purpose of maintaining a "free world"—has a tendency to destroy the universal quality of man's respect for man, and to replace it with partisan emotions.

(Reproduced from *Manas*, 14-10-'53)

Correction

In the last issue of the *Harijan*, on p. 340, Col. 1, para 3, line 7, after the words '..... our crying need of' add the word 'removing'.

HARIJAN

Jan. 2

1954

ARMED ECONOMY OF AMERICA

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

Modern world has the misfortune to hear of a new type of peace, the *armed* peace. In the wake of that variety of peace has naturally come about a new and consequential type of economy also, the *armed* economy. The credit for inventing this new variety should, I think, go to U. S. A., as can be seen from the recent working of that country's trade and diplomacy.

The cold war that is on in the world today has been swelling the military budgets of the nations of the world to gigantic proportions, and America is fast assuming the role of their financier by aiding them in various ways, direct and indirect. In this way the U. S. A. is securing for itself not only world's armament trade for its economy, but also subsidized allies for its anti-Soviet front. As a result the world is fast becoming an armed camp rather than the home of one happy human family. The vast jump made by U. S. A. from its Monroe Doctrine of isolation to world aid on a military basis is great indeed. It is surely a world event, affecting the destinies of numerous nations of the world.

The other day in Paris there met the "business" session of the NATO council, wherein the American Cabinet officers reassured worried Europeans that the U. S. A. was in Europe to stay and meant business, and as an earnest thereof it was going to share some of its atomic secrets. The meaning and consequence of this armed stay in Europe is clearly brought out by another decision of the 14 nations of the North Atlantic alliance, who pledged to spend more than 65,000 million dollars on defence in 1954, — perhaps a much needed and timely Christmas gift of Europe to America.

Another piece of information comes from England. We learn that thirty Labour Members of Parliament advocated that Britain should change her entire policy as a way out of the cold war between "the two giants" — Russia and America. Because, they say, Britain's present scale of armament expenditure "ties us in inescapable economic bonds to America and forces us more and more to say in the end the same as they on every world issue." And such a condition, they add, left no chance of starting the 'war on want' on right lines, which is badly necessary today.

Coming nearer home we find an ominous phenomenon brewing in the Middle East and now Pakistan. The Anglo-American sponsored MEDO idea having been stranded, at least so far as the present goes, America has taken a new line,

apparently leaving out Britain. From what is public information so far, it is certain that America and Pakistan are negotiating a military alliance which will be of the nature of armament aid and advice, and perhaps Pakistan's granting military bases to America.

Naturally Indian opinion has been deeply disturbed by this news and queerly enough the Pak Prime Minister has shown his resentment against it in the name of his country's freedom to do what it thought good for its interests. Surely such freedom it has, but freedom in the present world is not possible in isolation or in a political vacuum of its own. The question which the Pak Prime Minister should rather address himself to is another :

Why is he required to seek military alliance at all? And that again with a power that has or should have, ostensibly, nothing to do militarily with Pakistan and that part of the world? Shri Mohammed Ali has said that the alliance is of a defensive nature and that was felt necessary from learning a lesson from Korea's recent history. From whom does he fear aggression? — is a natural rejoinder, he has not answered still. Does he fear India? If so, then it is groundless, because we in India stand for peace and Shri Mohammed Ali can easily have a no-war treaty with us. If he really wants to secure peace for Pakistan, he should show his readiness for such a treaty; and more — he should express his desire to have an Indo-Pak common defence and military alliance. Geographically and politically also our defence requirements are almost of the same nature. We were one country, in terms of defence, only a few years back. If we agree and again have it, it will mean much saving of our people's hard-earned money, which we can turn to our much needed recovery and reconstruction. Instead of doing anything of this kind, to jump to distant America for military aid is surely not a piece of freedom that can be as innocent as is being made out by Pakistan.

To America the alliance is a new opening for its export trade and world political alignment. The cold war with Russia in the Korean sector seems to be cooling; there must be another sector to take its place even to feed American armament trade. Again India has been foolish enough not to heed to the American lead in world affairs; and she is so arrogant as to take a line of her own, and not even feel grateful to what aid the mighty dollar gives her in her economic plans and community projects. She must be made to realize her folly. The quarrelling neighbour Pakistan was perhaps thought to be a convenient handle. Pakistan perhaps felt it was necessary to increase its bargaining power in the Kashmir quarrel against India. The American aid was perhaps thought to be just the idea for it. For America it was a good beginning. With friendly Turkey at one end and Pakistan at the other, the long

intermediate band of Islam might be gradually won over to extend the NATO line of encircling the Soviet block upto India.

It is painful to say all this. The ways of diplomacy are unknown to the common man. Who knows what is up the sleeves of these two contracting powers? But this much is certain that the armed economy of America is spreading out its tentacles as distant as Pakistan and the danger thereof is patently clear. Does Pakistan realize it even for its own freedom and independence? If English M. P.'s have reason to complain, as is noted above, how much more will the American economic and military hold be felt by a country like Pakistan? And for Pakistan's neighbours on its East and West it will surely mean bringing the cold war nearer. The new kind of armed economy imperialism both of the so-called democratic or free world led by America and of the totalitarian world led by Russia will press hard upon the so-called backward and poor economy of the South-East Asian and Middle-East countries. And this new type of imperialism is no less overlording and aggressive than the old 19th century type of a political sort.

The question has therefore naturally arisen for us, how shall we meet this new menace of a Pak-American military alliance? The Prime Minister has said that we must all unite and thus be strong enough to meet it. This is surely not a war cry, but is a call on our sense of patriotism and love of peace to rise to the occasion. Such unity can be had only on the basis of the general happiness and contentment of our people; which means that our national policies and programmes on the home front must tend to be more and more for the common man and the millions who live in our villages. The American money that we get for their implementation, if it carries any strings with it, must be shunned as the British M. P.'s wish for their country. The whole picture presents a challenge to our foreign policy of positive peace and dynamic neutrality, and it must be squarely met by us.

22-12-'53

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CONVERSATION WITH VINOBA

[Shri Heareid Elwin, well-known world cycle-tourist, who was in the American embassy in Russia during the second World War, before launching his tour in India, came to see Shri Vinoba, accompanied him in his tour during the heavy showers of September and through mud and storm.

Throughout his stay with us Shri Elwin loved to live as we all did, and I found him a sincere admirer of Indian life and philosophy.

Here are some of his queries and Vinobaji's answers thereto. Shri Elwin was kind enough to prepare the following notes of his three talks with Shri Vinoba which, I feel, must be shared with the readers of the *Harijan*.

Walking Tour,

Bodhnagaya, 23-12-'53

Damodaradas Mundra]

I

FIRST CONVERSATION

Man and Machine

1. Question:

Might it be right to say that you are in favour of machines inasmuch as they reduce drudgery-tail; but against them in as much as they destroy the joy of creating home-crafts?

Answer:

Yes. But there are other factors. Firstly, there are machines such as aeroplanes which shorten time, and machines like radio that can be done by no other means. These are good. Secondly, there are machines which are against Man, such as destructive weapons. These are bad. Thirdly, there are machines which cause the loss, not only of joy, but employment: machines that produce mass-produced clothes, furniture, etc., are a direct loss to village industries and cause unemployment in villages, so that more than joy of creating is lost by these.

This third type of machine is bad for Indian villages now; but they may not always be, and in other countries they may be of service. Each situation needs its own remedy: and for now we must have village industries.

Life and Austerity

2. Question:

To me all self-sacrifice, austerity, self-imposed hardships, etc., seem noble if for the service of others, but against the Gift of Life if done for the sake of self-suffering. I mean that I think we have got life and the world to enjoy and when Trappist monks shut themselves up and practise self-hardships, austerities, or other religious orders, Anchorites, Ascetics, Fakirs, all nuns, etc. do likewise, they are doing wrong against the Giver of Life. What do you think about this?

Answer:

Self-imposed hardships, etc. done for the benefit of others become a joy: therefore the hardship is cancelled out.

But we should be careful about the word "enjoyment" of life. The real joy is self-realization and self-realization can come through service to others. This becomes a joy.

We should remember that not only is there joy in life but joy in death as well. If we are ill and suffering and our body is ailing and no one

can help or relieve us, death becomes a joy. And a healthy man also should always look to death with joy.

Monks and nuns who practise self-imposed hardships, if they do it for hardships' sake, are not helping others: they are not doing rightly.

3. *Question:*

(This, in a way, continues Question 2). Since the primary function for the continuance of the human race is procreation and since so many of the individual human struggles arise in all the emotions that surround life man-with-woman, etc. (at least it is so in our Western world) do not Brahmacharis by their vow of celibacy deny themselves knowledge of the human heart which they should not do, since they live for the helping of humanity forward?

I really mean, would not ascetics be more knowledgeable had they the knowledge of the common human emotions?

Answer:

A person who is in the thick of the fray is not the one who can see the whole problem greatest. He can see the problem greatest who will stand aloof and look at it from the outside. In the same way, one who paints a picture stands outside, away from the subject as he paints it.

For the purpose of procreation very little intercourse is needed and married life seems often nothing else but lawful and organized debauchery. But there must be made a distinction between Brahmacharya and a mere vow of celibacy. The Brahmachari is one who has decided to stand aloof and the vow of celibacy is a mere point in this.

War and Non-violence

4. *Question:*

In 1938 the Norwegian Foreign Minister was asked what he was doing about the defence of the country. He said, "We will rely upon the decency of other nations." But in 1940 in a few fearful months this peace-loving and happy land was overrun by the German forces.

What do you think would have been right in this question?

Answer:

The Norwegian Foreign Minister should have preached non-violence. Non-violence is a positive force differing from Pacifism, which is a mere negating of the use of arms.

What is God?

5. *Question:*

I would like you to tell me, if you would be so kind, what do you mean by God?

Answer:

If all our earthly body, etc. was taken away there would still be something left, a consciousness, which is supremely us. There is that something in everyone. And just as our body is a world, so at the same time we are all parts of a greater world and all our consciousnesses are part of a mighty whole.

That is God.

Herald Elwin: Then why do you pray to it?

Answer: Because, if when we feel like an uplift we pray or speak to part of the mighty whole we can feel we get help. We are a part of it and it is greater than us and so we can draw from its fountain. That is why we pray to it.

H. E.: Then God is abstract?

Answer: Oh yes, God is abstract.

II

SECOND CONVERSATION

Joy of Death

(Thoughts on the answers given and further questions)

Continuing *Question 2:*

You said that we should look forward to death as a joy. Can you say more on this? It seems to me that even if the hereafter be beautiful, that death nevertheless is a parting from good friends and the last glimpse of a lovely world. Also, however strong the faith may be, surely what happens after death must remain a question-mark?

Answer:

We cannot have all sweet: there is sweet and sour. There are sadnesses at death but we are also released from a useless body which has become of no value to us, an encumbrance. We, ourselves, go on. We take on all which is of worth with us.

What is the present? There is past, present and future. The past is infinity, the future is infinity, the present is but a second and less. That is life. Before us was infinity: after us is infinity: these 60 years or so are less than a second in the ocean.

Yes, after-death remains a question-mark. But science has shown us that nothing is destructible, everything that is, always is; only it breaks up sometimes and goes to different forms. Our body cracks up but what is us remains. We know there was an infinity of time before us. We can know that there will be an infinity of time after us.

About friends and so on: What is of value to us we will take on. Ask anyone what happened to him in his first four years of life, he will know little. And of any other four years he will remember some but not all. But what is of value to him he brings on with him and so after death what is of intrinsic value to us we will take on.

H. E.: So you think that some of what you are now is something you have brought with you from another time?

Answer: Yes, certainly. We continue to add to ourselves until we have no longer need of an earthly body to help us. Then we have achieved ourselves. This is the Hindu philosophy.

Marriage and Brahmacharya

Continuing *Question 3:*

I cannot see that lust in married life is akin to debauchery. I consider intercourse with a

woman deeply loved a beautiful and holy joy. Certainly it is animal: but is it not right to say that nothing is either good or bad but thinking makes it so? It seems to me that the attitude about contact with women is a state of mind.

This is my original thought: surely there is *nothing* in us that we have been given, including lusts, which — with regard to the laws of society — we should not fully enjoy?

Although I appreciate the point that he who stands aloof is the better judge, is not he the better judge who has previous experience in this field from which he now stands aloof?

Answer:

I did not mean that lust in married life is debauchery. I mean this: nothing should be done without a purpose. What is the purpose of this lust with which we find ourselves? To beget children. Then we will need to use this lust not more than two or three times in a lifetime. What we do outside this becomes debauchery, for we are not using the lust for the purpose for which we were given it. They talk today of contraceptives. But what is this? This means that men shall go through a lust which is meant for the production of children and then not produce children.

A farmer gets a joy from sowing seed but does he do it for the joy? No, he does it for the bringing forth of wheat. Would a farmer sow seed, then throw in something which would prevent the growing? Or would he sow seed at all if he did not want wheat? Everything must be done with a purpose and if it is not we are missing the purpose for which we are given that lust.

Supposing you so love smoking that you built yourself a special room, shut yourself up and smoked and smoked, what would you think?

H. E.: I was wasting time.

Answer: Exactly. And so intercourse without thought of productivity is a waste of time and a misuse of our energy.

H. E.: You believe absolutely in sublimation?

Answer: Of course. We should not just turn these things into a game. That energy, or lust, we have left over after we have gone in for the production of children we should turn to a purpose. I will accept your adjectives that this act with a wife deeply loved is a beautiful and holy joy, but I will tell you it is wrong except when done for productivity.

There is steam. It comes and comes, but Watt discovered that by conserving it and using it skilfully we can make a locomotive go. Thus we should do with our lusts.

Do you not think that we all experience passions? But look at a cricket match, eleven men in it: who gets the greatest joy and knows wisest? The spectators, not those taking part.

H. E.: But a *cricketer* among the spectators would be a better judge than a non-cricketer. My point is that if two Indians wanted to write a book on England, he would be the better equipped who had been through England.

Answer: Yes, but there is no one in the world who has not been through passions and knows the heart. Why do you think that Brahmacharis should not be able to assess passions?

H. E.: (later) I suppose you would be completely against William Blake's line: "The road of excess leads to the Palace of Wisdom".

Answer: No, I am not completely against it. There are many roads and that may be one of them.

War and Non-violence

Continuing Question 4:

Your answer about Norway and non-violence. I consider this an ideal and a dream. Good luck to it, but I feel it is a long road to that goal.

Answer:

I do not agree that it is a long road. What do wars bring? We have just had two World Wars in 25 years. We are further off from peace: Not nearer. People will soon see that non-violence is the only way, that violence has never done anything.

H. E.: You speak as a good man, and a philosopher and a believer in non-violence. But there are plenty of Hitlers in the world who are neither good, nor philosophers, nor believers in non-violence.

Answer: Bring me your Hitlers, I am not afraid of them. Germany will learn. They had one and look what it taught them.

H. E.: Germany will have another.

Answer: Yes, and another and another: I tell you they will learn. In the end experience will teach them. But it is not world wars I am afraid of: it's the little wars. We have had two World Wars and we won't need many more to teach us that world wars must not be and that non-violence is the only way. Already Russia is realizing some of this and is changing her attitudes.

III

THIRD CONVERSATION

More about God

Continuing Question 5:

I follow your meaning of God and deeply appreciate it. But it remains for me in the present tense. Would you kindly tell me your thoughts on the Creation and the Hereafter?

Answer:

All the stories of the Creation in the Bible, in the Hindu religion etc. are nothing but myths made to explain the Creation to simple people and children.

H. E.: Then is it not a pity to tell even children something which is false?

Answer: But it is only an attempt at an explanation. "Six days had God laboured and on the seventh day He rested"—pity it wasn't suggested that on the seventh day we might put some time aside for contemplation.

H. E.: But you see the fault of this? This has given the impression of a personal God. That God is something fantastic who made us and to whom we should stand in awe, etc.

Answer: No one must stand in any fear of God. Personal or impersonal: abstract or concrete: we really know so little of what God is. But we are a part of Him and all God is Mighty.

You ask about the Hereafter. You said in one of your early questions that must not the Hereafter remain a question-mark: and it must remain a question-mark.

The scientist has tried to prove that the earth was born twenty thousand million years ago or some such figure and that it will die in about the same period—which is quite enough for you and me, isn't it? It might be right. It might be wrong. If this world fades that makes no difference to us because, as I have told you, we are a part of something else.

Sacrificial Spinning

6. Question:

Do you hope that everyone shall do weaving, or is it meant only as a principle for your own followers?

Answer:

You are probably mixing up weaving with spinning which is what we do every day. Yes, it is our desire that everyone should spin.

H. E.: Should not everyone do according to his ability and if one does carpentry better than another and the second spins better than the first should not one make all the furniture and the other spin?

Answer: It is good if there is one thing which everyone does. It makes a common touch between all. Spinning is useful. If everyone merely spins for fifteen minutes a day, it can be something which does all good and is useful at the same time.

Money

7. Question:

About your new financial goals. Isn't it unearned incomes and not earned incomes which are the big fault and should be tackled first?

Answer:

Yes, you are right. But money is something which we want to do away with altogether. Let each have just enough of everything he needs for the day: food, clothing and so on.

H. E.: But don't you make for complications? Supposing suddenly you wanted the money to send a son to England?

Answer: It makes for complications if you take it very literally. But do not. It is a principle:

and anyhow it would do well for our villages in their present condition: and that is our problem. One man should produce corn and another oil and so forth, and they should barter and simply exchange.

H. E.: But then shouldn't someone decide how much corn is worth how much oil, otherwise the cunning man will prosper?

Answer: But if the economy and life and spirit is such that he will gain nothing from cunning, then the cunning man will disappear.

BHOODAN FIGURES

(Up to 5-12-'53)

S.N.	Name of the State	Total Collection (in acres)	Distribution	
			Acres	Number of Families
1.	Assam	1,349		
2.	Andhra	10,299		
3.	Uttar Pradesh	5,00,642	27,402	4,607
4.	Orissa	47,499		
5.	Karnatak	1,634		
6.	Kerala	10,000		
7.	Gujarat	20,845		
8.	Tamilnad	14,252	285	
9.	Delhi	7,659		
10.	Punjab	3,183		
11.	Bengal	395		
12.	Bihar	12,97,868		
13.	Madhya Pradesh	58,628	928	
14.	Madhya Bharat	55,730		
15.	Maharashtra	9,504		
16.	Mysore	2,196		
17.	Rajasthan	2,29,770	700	80
18.	Vindhya Pradesh	3,963	125	
19.	Saurashtra	8,000		
20.	Himachal Pradesh	1,350		
21.	Hyderabad (Dn.)	71,695	10,329	2,195
Total		23,56,521	39,739	6,882

Note: The above is based on authorized reports received from provincial committees. Gift-deeds and promises secured currently by workers' parties are not included here. Up-to-date reports from a few States are still awaited.

KRISHNARAJ MEHTA,
Office Secretary,
A. I. Sarva Seva Sangh

Sevagram, Ward

BHOODAN YAJNA

[Land-gifts Mission]

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